

## Teachers' participation in school decision making

*The environment in schools and classrooms may be affected by the extent to which teachers participate in decisions about important school policies and issues and the autonomy teachers have in the classroom. Data on teachers' opinions about their influence over school policies and the control that they have over their classrooms can contribute to current debates on teacher professionalism.*

- More teachers perceive that they have control over classroom policies than over school policies. For example, in the 1993–94 school year, a higher percentage of teachers perceived having a good deal\* of control over classroom decisions than perceived having a good deal of influence over their school's policies (ranging from 57 to 87 percent and 31 to 38 percent, respectively).
- Private school teachers were more likely than public school teachers to perceive having influence over their school's policies and control over most of their classroom decisions in the 1993–94 school year.
- Public and private secondary teachers were more likely than elementary teachers to perceive having a good deal of control over some classroom decisions, such as selecting textbooks, determining the content, topics, and skills to be taught, and selecting teaching techniques. Elementary school teachers perceived having more control over decisions concerning disciplining students and determining the content of in-service programs.
- Private school principals were more likely than public school principals to perceive that teachers had a good deal of influence over establishing curriculum, while public school principals were more likely to perceive that teachers had a good deal of influence over determining the content of in-service programs.

### Teachers' and principals' perceptions of the amount of influence or control teachers had over selected school and classroom decisions in their schools, by control and level of school: School year 1993–94

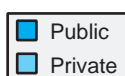
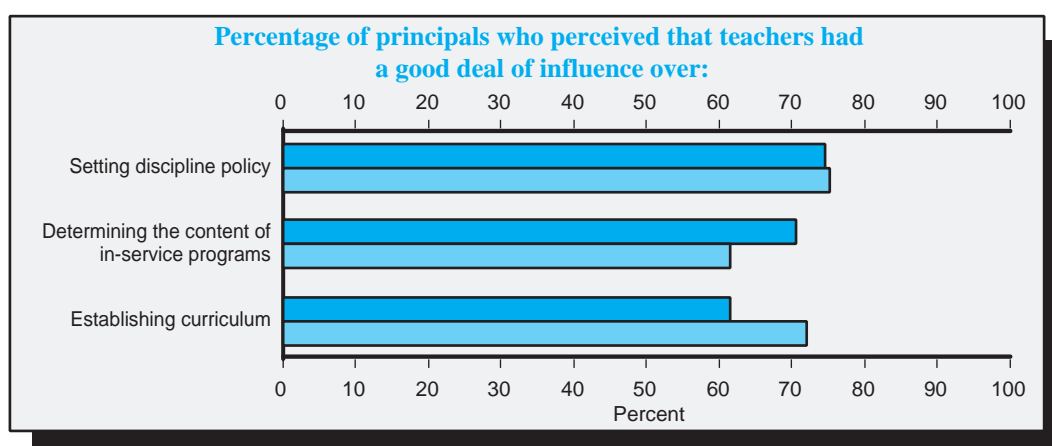
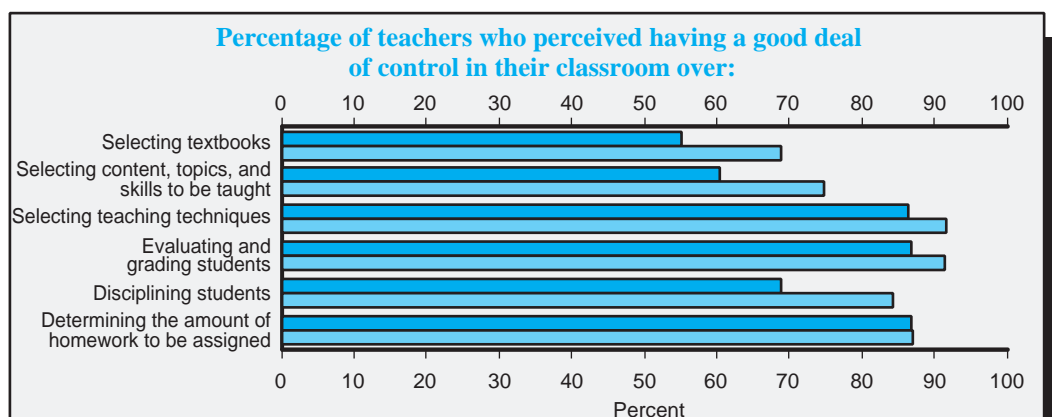
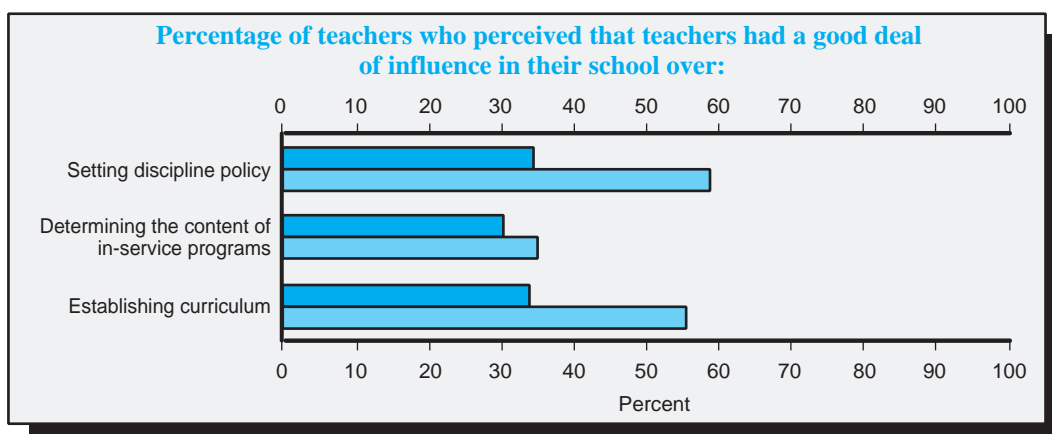
School and classroom decisions	All schools	Public			Private		
		Total	Elementary	Secondary	Total	Elementary	Secondary
Percentage of teachers who perceived that teachers had a good deal of influence in their school over:							
Setting discipline policy	38.0	34.9	41.9	27.3	59.2	64.6	51.7
Determining the content of in-service programs	31.2	30.6	32.6	28.5	35.3	36.4	33.7
Establishing curriculum	37.1	34.3	31.8	37.0	55.7	55.0	56.8
Percentage of teachers who perceived having a good deal of control in their classroom over:							
Selecting textbooks and other instructional materials	57.0	55.2	48.9	62.1	68.8	63.4	76.6
Selecting content, topics, and skills to be taught	62.4	60.5	54.3	67.3	74.9	69.7	82.2
Selecting teaching techniques	87.1	86.5	83.9	89.2	91.7	89.9	94.3
Evaluating and grading students	87.4	86.8	83.8	90.1	91.5	90.1	93.4
Disciplining students	70.9	68.9	73.4	64.0	84.3	86.2	81.8
Determining the amount of homework to be assigned	86.8	86.7	83.7	90.0	86.9	85.5	89.0
Percentage of principals who perceived that teachers had a good deal of influence over:							
Setting discipline policy	74.8	74.6	75.5	72.5	75.3	82.2	68.9
Determining the content of in-service programs	68.4	70.6	70.3	71.6	61.6	66.6	70.1
Establishing curriculum	64.1	61.5	59.7	66.2	72.1	74.0	76.9

\* Respondents were asked about influence and control on a scale of 0–5, with 0 meaning “no influence” or “no control,” and 5 meaning a “great deal of influence” or “complete control.” Responses 4 and 5 were combined in this analysis.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94 (Public School Teacher, Private School Teacher, Public School Principal, and Private School Principal questionnaires).

NOTE: Data are revised from previously published figures.

**Teachers' and principals' perceptions of the amount of influence or control teachers had over school and classroom decisions, by control of school:**  
**School year 1993–94**



NOTE: Respondents were asked about influence and control on a scale of 0–5, with 0 meaning "no influence" or "no control," and 5 meaning "a great deal of influence" or "complete control." Responses 4 and 5 were combined in this analysis.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94 (Public School Teacher, Private School Teacher, Public School Principal, and Private School Principal questionnaires).

**Table S39**      **Standard errors for the text table in *Indicator 39***

School and classroom decisions	All schools	Public			Private		
		Total	Elementary	Secondary	Total	Elementary	Secondary
Percentage of teachers who perceived that teachers had a good deal of influence in their school over:							
Setting discipline policy	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.9	1.0
Determining the content of in-service programs	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.9
Establishing curriculum	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.0
Percentage of teachers who perceived having a good deal of control in their classroom over:							
Selecting textbooks and other instructional materials	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.9
Selecting content, topics, and skills to be taught	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.7
Selecting teaching techniques	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
Evaluating and grading students	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4
Disciplining students	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.7
Determining the amount of homework to be assigned	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.7
Percentage of principals who perceived that teachers had a good deal of influence over:							
Setting discipline policy	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.5	2.5
Determining the content of in-service programs	0.5	0.8	0.9	0.7	1.3	1.6	3.0
Establishing curriculum	0.6	0.8	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.6	2.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94 (Public School Teacher, Private School Teacher, Public School Principal, and Private School Principal questionnaires).